TROPICAL LIFE
Holiday concert of local jazz singer Nicole Henry is an annual tradition 1C

SPORTS
Cutler is playing great for Dolphins but won't commit to next season 1B

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Mostly sunny 76°/58° See 10B

Miami Herald

* H1

TAX REFORM

Rubio and Corker throw support to Republicans' massive tax plan

BY DAMIAN PALETTA, ERICA WERNER, JEFF STEIN AND MIKE DEBONIS
The Washington Post

The support of Sen. Marco Rubio and Sen. Bob Corker virtually ensures that Republicans now have the votes they need to pass the tax measure through the Senate next week.

WASHINGTON

Congressional Republicans secured enough support Friday afternoon to pass their massive tax plan into law after two critical holdouts, Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., signaled they would vote for it.

Rubio emerged as a final challenge in a complicated political puzzle that the White House and GOP leaders have been assembling for the past two months. His decision to vote for the package came after a standoff with Republican leaders that led to a last-minute expansion of the Child Tax Credit.

Corker's support was unexpected, as he had voted against the measure two weeks ago and none of his demands about deficit reduction had been met. But he said in a statement that he believed the bill was a "once-in-a-generation opportunity" that,

SEE TAX PLAN, 2A

PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAIS AP

Marco Rubio called the planned expansion of the Child Tax Credit a 'solid step toward broader reforms.'

VENEZUELA

FERNANDO LLANO AP

A woman holds a plate with a corn dough tamale known as hallaca at a Christmas fair in a state-owned market in Caracas. Venezuela's most-enduring Christmas tradition — the gathering of family to prepare hallacas — is under threat from the nation's economic crisis.

Venezuelan Christmas treat is latest casualty of an economic crisis

BY GUSTAVO OCANDO ALEX
Special to the Miami Herald

In Venezuela, giving away and eating hallacas — corn-flour tamales — is a tradition. But that tradition is dying amid the country's hyperinflation and chronic food shortages.

MARACAIBO, VENEZUELA

Maritza Díaz, a 72-year-old homemaker, gapes at the prices of the products on display at La Limpia market in Maracaibo, Venezuela's second-largest city.

She's sad, shocked, scandalized.

She doesn't understand why a kilo of cheese — about 2.2 pounds — costs 200,000 bolivars on this day in mid-December, or about $2.20 at current exchange rates. Just two weeks ago, it cost less than $1.

The price of food in stores in Venezuela is doubling in a matter of days, even hours. Coffee, bread, sugar, spices — everything is going up amid the country's crushing hyperinflation. That means Díaz and her extended family don't have enough money to buy the ingredients of Venezuela's most traditional Christmas dish: hallacas.

Hallacas are a kind of corn-flour tamale: banana leaves wrapped around a stew of beef, pork or chicken and boiled. Venezuelans say they taste like Christmas.

SEE VENEZUELA, 2A

HIGHER EDUCATION

FIU to suspend Greek life activities in January

BY LANCE DIXON
ldixon@miamiherald.com

Following the lead of other major college campuses, Florida International University announced Friday that it will suspend Greek life for at least one month starting at the beginning of 2018.

FIU President Mark Rosenberg sent a letter to students and employees announcing that activities from Greek fraternities and sororities would be suspended for a month starting Jan. 1. He cited "growing concerns" about Greek life at FIU and on other college campuses as the reason.

"I appreciate the work done thus far by Greek leaders who understand that the current state is not acceptable," Rosenberg said in the letter. "I hope all members of the Greek community at FIU will join me in ensuring that we take this opportunity to establish and observe norms that are consistent with safe and respectful behavior that uplifts the community and provides a supportive culture of growth and tolerance."

Rosenberg's move comes after the deaths of fraternity pledges at campus-

SEE FIU, 2A

LOCAL & STATE

ANOTHER CASE OF ANIMAL ABUSE

Three workers were charged with animal cruelty of dairy cows at McArthur Farm in Okeechobee. **3A**

LOCAL & STATE

STRAY BULLET KILLS BABY BOY

A 2-year-old boy was shot and killed by a stray bullet Friday night in the courtyard of a Goulds apartment complex. **2A**

LOCAL & STATE

DEA WARNS ABOUT LETHAL COCAINE

DEA issued a warning Friday about a lethal synthetic form of cocaine that has become widespread in Florida. **3A**

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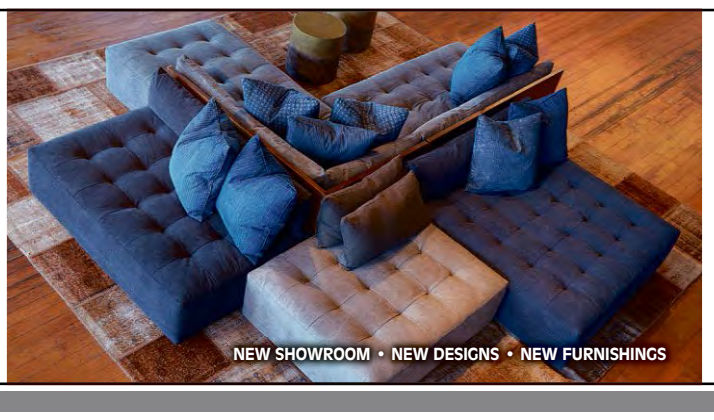

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